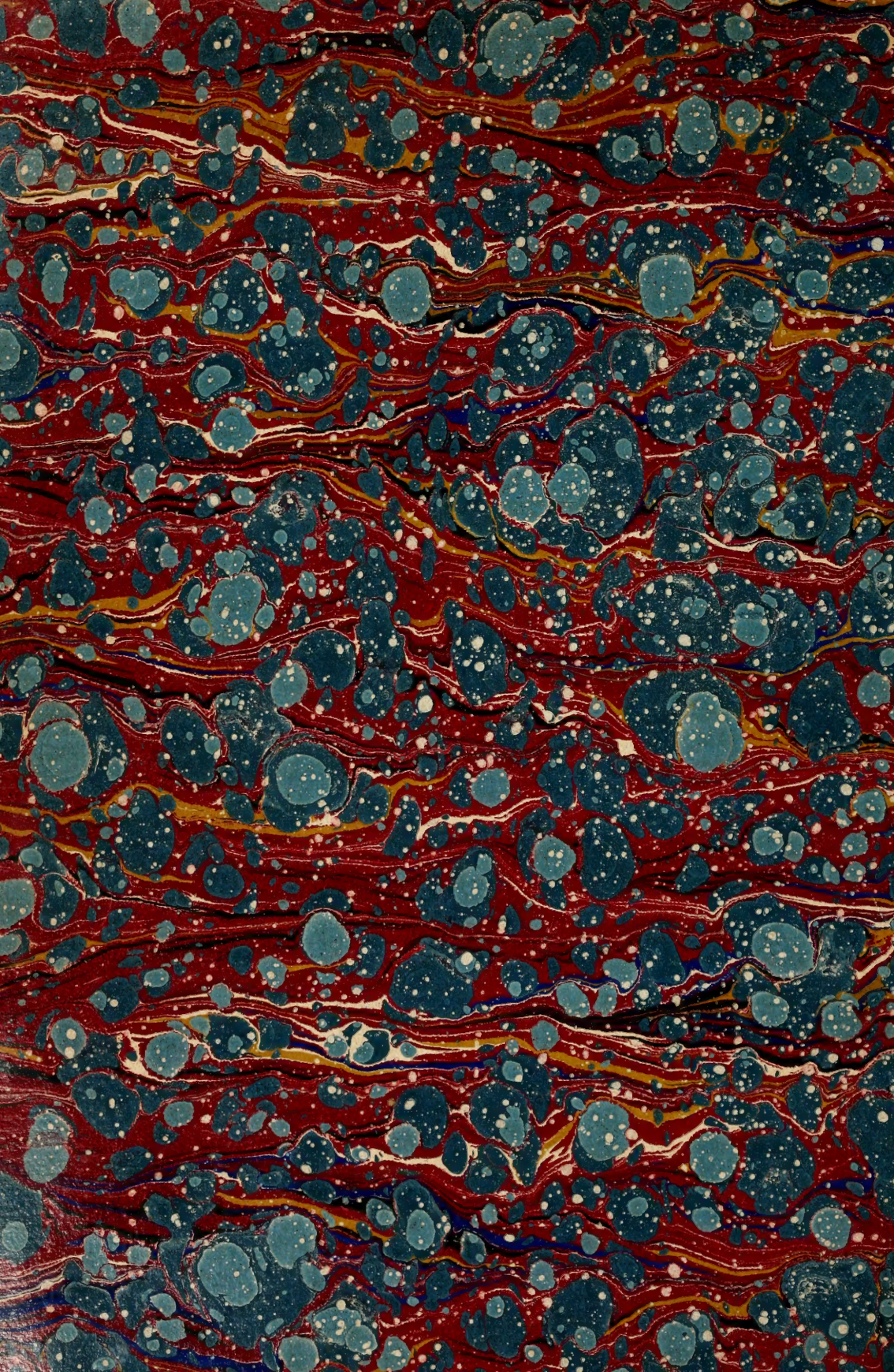

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The Onlooker

A Literary Journal of Independent Critical Opinion on Public Affairs

Vol. I—No. 11 TORONTO, MARCH, 1921 Price—20c.

For the People

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THE ONLOOKER

JAMES COBOURG HODGINS, Editor

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A WORD TO THE PROTECTIONIST LIBERALS

THOSE Liberals who, made wise by experience, clearly see that Free Trade, or an approach to Free Trade, would not only bankrupt Canada but throw it into the arms of the United States by placing it in the humiliating position of a mendicant for the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table to the South, had better do some clear thinking and acting and line up where they really belong. They cannot afford to halt any longer between two opinions; the danger is too real; the threatened disaster too imminent.

The situation is, indeed, critical; for not only is our bread and butter threatened, but, what is far worse, our national soul. Are we really prepared to sell our birthright for a mess of pottage? Have we forgotten that "man liveth not by bread alone," and that a nation is but the individual enlarged? Sometimes it would seem so.

If our American neighbors really enjoy the faked-up films that transgress the canons of all true art, that, of course, is their business and none of ours, but let art to us mean beauty and truth. If the unspeakably coarse, uncouth, and, morally speaking, foul cartoons that add to the circulation of their yellow sheets, and a few of ours, evoke laughter among mobs to the South, let us wonder but not imitate any longer. If Religion is to be measured by vaudeville standards and put on a commercial basis by cold-blooded exploiters of the heart, let us at least turn to the God of our Fathers and worship "in spirit and in truth." We shall be none the worse for devoutness, silence, reverence and a decent respect for holy things.

We may be slow in the matter of money-making and a little out-of-date, but, even so, there are some things—inherited and acquired—that count more in the long run than pelf and that go to make that intangible asset which may best be described as national character. We have nothing to learn from a nation, at present, steeped to the eyes in commercialism. Let us accept Emerson and reject Hearst; take Longfellow and Whittier and Holmes to our hearts and cast out the violators of a great literary tradition who now hold the stage; cling to our ancient freedom, which is of the spirit, and not allow our liberty to be strangled by a mass of intricate and selfish laws; keep the ermine pure, the married life inviolate, the soul of our people faithful to a great inheritance.

In urging this we have no *animus* against America. Every nation has what the Scotch call its "orra places." We have our

own; and, in the matter of low, tricky politics devoid of all statesmanship and vision, can match their worst. We are not claiming superiority. If we were taking from the United States its noblest literature instead of greedily lapping up its literary swill no fault could be found. That sort of spiritual commerce is honoring alike to those who give and to those who take. These lines are not written in anger against Americans, but in reproach against Canadians. The worst in America does not represent the true America, yet it is the worst that we buy and tolerate to the extent of almost three millions a year. Meantime, Canadian literature and art languish or are driven far afield.

The Onlooker has never questioned the sincerity of those visiting Americans who affirm that annexation is the last thing that the people of the United States are thinking of at the present time. But what about the future? Doubtless of the *élite* of America the gospel of goodwill is true. Were the question of annexation put in certain wards in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, or even Chicago it would be turned down; but if it were left to the more than eight hundred thousand Irish in Boston, fiercely anti-British at this hour, it would be carried with a whoop. Were it put to a plebiscite in North Dakota there would hardly be a dissenting voice. At the back of the brain of the *average* American there lies the conviction that sooner or later but one flag will fly over the whole surface of the North American continent from the North Pole to the isthmus of Panama. He calls it, and has called it for years, "Inevitable Destiny." We do not blame him. The genuine native-born American has many lovable qualities. The late Col. Wentworth Higginson described him as "A Britisher with one drop more of nervous fluid," and the description is, in the main, accurate. Philadelphia, *e.g.*, is curiously English and conservative, and has erected cricket into a local fetish; and there are parts of the South at this hour that seem not to have outgrown the reign of Queen Anne. All this is true, and all to the good; but that does not alter the fact that the United States is rapidly becoming a polyglot Republic, and that quite soon it will be peopled by a folk the majority of whom will be of a different psychological make-up to ourselves. The danger may not be immediate, but in dim outline it already looms vast on the national horizon and fills some of us with apprehension.

In other words, it is not in the power of any American well-wisher to give us assurances as to the future. So far as we in Canada are concerned, what lies before us, a clear and evident duty, is to make it plain to Americans that we wish them entirely well in working out their stupendous destiny, but that we also propose, Heaven helping us, to work out a destiny equally glorious, though on different lines.

It is not the matter of present goodwill that we are calling in

question; though we might, and not transgress the bounds of justice and fair play, point out that all the violent and ill-mannered diatribes of recent years have originated on only one side of the Atlantic. In the matter of minding its own business Britain has been punctilious almost to the point of weakness and absurdity. We will even go so far as to say that the eagerness of Great Britain to be on solid, good terms with America has always had in it a true touch of pathos. She has recognized, by that wise instinct granted only to the magnanimous, that the United States is a sort of British Empire within fixed bounds, and that the central authority at Washington cannot be held to strict account for all that takes place among unassimilated aliens. Dealing herself daily with many alien peoples, she has a clear envisagement of the difficulties of the problem. It is only when, as in the case of the Venezuela Incident, the antagonism seems to come from the very heart and soul of America that the threat stings.

We are not calling upon the people of Canada to "Beware of the Greeks bearing gifts!" These visitors are intensely sincere and kindly. They mean every word they utter. Only we cannot ignore, and would be, indeed, fools to ignore, recent developments in the United States since the war. The floating of Irish bonds (a palpable swindle), the burning and insulting of the British flag, the tolerance of rebels and murderers, the whole anti-British propaganda which has been allowed to flourish unchecked reveal, as in a flash-light, the existence of a vast population who would be only too glad to dismember the Empire by suborning or annexing this land which our fathers bequeathed to us to have and to hold for ever for the British race on this continent. We propose to do so. Our self-respect demands it.

It is not the cultivated American, half of whose heart and almost the whole of whose culture is in Britain, we dread. It is not spiritual and intellectual America we fear. It is commercial America we doubt. For commerce is impersonal, without sentiment, and takes no cognizance of those higher things that illuminate and enrich the national life. So far, indeed, as the soul is concerned, gold is the deadliest of narcotics. The true danger lies in scarcely recognized *impersonal* tendencies with which kindly expressions of goodwill have little or nothing to do. These move forward like glaciers; and it is only when the crash and thunder of the avalanche smites the air and we behold the resulting devastation that we realize our folly and our shame, but then it is always too late.

Nations are controlled by a sort of gravitation in the direction of glory and power. It is the massed effect of national energy, itself the result of biological laws, that is to be dreaded, and which must be countered and checked by contiguous powers eager to preserve their identity. At first this effect is felt as an influence,

subtle, insidious, all-pervasive. Ancient ideals are displaced, new points of view are unconsciously adopted; what at first is but naïve imitation afterwards becomes a fixed habit; and the conquest of one ideal by the other (usually the stronger) becomes in time complete. Had German influence of this character persisted in Italy the soul of Italy would have been destroyed. If American influence is not countered and checked by native pride in our own achievements and the maintenance of our financial strength, the fate of Canada will be sealed. In that event it will not be America that will be to blame, but our own incapacity to build up and maintain a truly united commonwealth in the northern part of this hemisphere. We must, indeed, stand on guard, not only in defence of our trade but of our interpretation of freedom and our philosophy of life. We must originate or become parasitic and dependent. We must establish complete financial independence or become mere wage-slaves to the powerful trusts south of the line. We must block out, by boldness and courage, a separate destiny or disappear for ever as a people from the page of history and die ere we had begun to live.

Let us look the problem squarely in the face. It is the *soul* of Canada that is involved at the present moment; for if we allow ourselves to pass into financial helotage to the great trusts to the south political union is bound to follow. Do we really wish this? Have we not a career opening before us in this young land, unique and splendid? Is it to come true that a people dowered with the riches of ten empires failed, through pusillanimity, to achieve greatness and glory; aye, and happiness and prosperity? Would we be fit to hold up our heads among men if we should basely place our heads between the knees of the Colossus of the south and breathe the slave's prayer, "Be thou lord over us and we will be thy men!"? It may, indeed, come to pass, but it will be over a good many dead bodies.

What is the actual situation? This: Through faint-heartedness and sloth, through ignorance and indifference we are rapidly placing Canada, and the soul of Canada, at the mercy of great, powerful financial interests that, just because they are financial and for no other reason, will not rest till every industry in this country is completely in their control. They cannot help it; they but obey the law of their being; we do not blame them. But we have a right to ask of all loyal Canadians: Do you really wish this noble young land, now sanctified by imperishable memories of valor, to pass out of that noble Confederacy of free men which is the hope of mankind and lose its identity among roaring masses whose psychology and heredity is alien to the great traditions that have made you what you are? "Stop! Look! Listen!" runs the now familiar sign. Hard thinking is what is needed at this hour; not lazy optimism.

Let us lower the Tariff—our only weapon of defence—and buy in excess of what we sell and we will soon reach a point where, in order to live, we will be forced to yield up in payment of the monstrous balance against us the cream of our natural resources to the stranger and the foreigner, or borrow, *i.e.*, mortgage those same resources, or confess national bankruptcy.

Under Free Trade the end would come like a clap of thunder out of the blue of heaven. The peril is real. There are men in this country, and not a few, as the election in Peterboro revealed, who are quite prepared to leave the whole land naked and open, not only to exploitation from the direction of the United States, but from Germany as well. It sounds monstrous and incredible, but it is true; and this in face of the fact that our manufacturers produced a sum seven hundreds of millions in excess of the total value of all our farm products. We cannot begin to close ranks too soon against this common peril.

It is idle to say that no matter who gets into power the Tariff will be safe. Those who use such arguments have not been following the speeches of Alexander Crerar and Mr. Drury. These men, and, apparently, those whom they represent, are open Free Traders and make no bones about it. It is useless arguing with obsessed theorists. All the theorist cares for is the triumph of his pet obsession. Though the last day should come for the last man he would smile his idiotic smile, announce the final triumph of his theory and then yield up the ghost. Crerar and Drury are dangerous with the fanaticism of ignorance. Let but the present division and ignorant party strife go on and the great end to be aimed at—which at present is fiscal solvency—be lost sight of in the noise and confusion, and the whole edifice of national credit will tumble about our ears.

And those editors who, for paltry party reasons, are playing up to class hate and inherited prejudice at the present time have a heavy sin to answer for and the future historian will judge them harshly. They are without honor and without shame. They know in their hearts that *no one human group is any better or wiser than any other group.* But it pleases them to fawn and flatter these and damn and vilify those. But the plain truth is that we are all of a piece; the whole race is in each one of us; we are, in fact, God's great average. How absurd, then, how monstrous to clothe men bearing the inherited name of Liberal with the virtues of archangels and smear the faces of those who bear the equally honorable name of Conservative with the stour of the pit. It is not a question of men, but of principles and sincerity. Above all else it is a question of Canada and her destiny at this hour. It is perfectly allowable to combat the logic of the Prime Minister with logic; it is infamous to fasten upon him the epithet of *sinister.* Sinister he is not; logical, clear, convincing and courageous, who dare deny? His style is pellucid and crystalline—a clear run over the gravel with every

stone in sight. If, instead of attributing base motives to the head of the state and then charging him with having originated them, the editors in question would only patiently study his style and emulate his sturdy honesty we would, at any rate, have better English, and most certainly better sense.

The fact is that the old Laurier-Liberal party has been split apart by two distinct wedges—one half of the log falling to the Lapointe-King group and the other to the party headed by the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen. The first wedge, driven home and driven hard, was loyalty to the men who were fighting and dying in France; the second, on the top of that, was Protection as an indispensable policy—not only as a safeguard to our industries, but as a weapon of defence in the service of all that we hold dear. There are hundreds of thousands of Liberals who have no use for the Hon. Mackenzie King. When the "line-up" was demanded in the name of loyalty they answered without hesitation "Adsum!" We may be sure that these men—British and Canadian to the core—will vote for a continuance of the trade-policy under which Canada has prospered for almost half a century. Just at present the opposing hosts are manœuvring for position, and sniping and spying and false propaganda are the order of the day. Drury is trying to bring radical labor and the farmers into one homogeneous phalanx. and is simple enough to believe that a mere phrase, "The People's Party," will turn the trick. Crerar, having committed the U.G.G. to vast enterprises, is apparently getting ready to remove to Ottawa permanently—he hopes, as Premier. Lapointe and King hover in the background, ready to compromise on any terms with anybody, so they gain the seats of Power. These are the armies, or rather the composite mob, to which the National Liberal-Conservative Party finds itself opposed. They represent anarchy and division, are not agreed on any policy, and the three leaders of the three separate hosts are madly jealous of each other and work in separation.

The biggest asset Canada possesses to-day is the personality of the Premier. He literally towers above his opponents. Had the Government endorsed Burnham they would have carried Peterboro with ease. But to have done so would have been to have lowered the moral tone of the whole people and to have exalted political chicanery above honor. Such defeats, on the long average, lead to the only victories that are worth while—victories of reason and common-sense.

Men of small mentality, who through adventitious circumstances, find themselves in places of undeserved prominence, as a rule, find it impossible to discriminate between conscience and conceit. They mistake notoriety for fame, and mere publicity for power. But in the final winnowing of history they are but "as the chaff which the wind driveth away." The defeat of Mr. Burnham

was a triumph of political integrity. He was defeated because a government made up of gentlemen abandoned him to a well-deserved fate.

What stands out with naked clearness is that there is an alignment between the advocates of Free Trade and those who are convinced that in an adequate Protective Tariff lies our only safety. The farmer-group, headed by Crerar and Drury, have come out into the open. As to where they stand there can be no doubt whatever. We do not believe that they have the bulk of the yeomen with them, but without doubt they have a considerable following, and we would go so far as to say a dangerous following. This group constitutes a grave menace—if they only knew it or could be brought to realize it, to their own class most of all. But there they stand ready, like Samson, to tear down the pillars of the temple. Logic is lost on them; they are at the stage which may be described as sing-song fanaticism—a mere ululation of platitudes. The world has been through this sort of thing many times. It is a sort of a rash or contagion which seems to afflict large classes of the population in periods of intense emotional excitement. It has never been long-lived among the Anglo-Saxon peoples, who, at bottom, have a profound respect for fact; but among the Latin and Slavic groups it mounts to fury and ends usually in blood.

It is the reasoned conviction of *The Onlooker* that when the *real* farmers of the country, whose capital is not in their vocal organs but in land and gear and securities, clearly grasp the drift of the wild heresies that are being put forth in their name by a few irresponsible and wholly untrained agitators, they will cast them without the camp. History is a great comfort in these days; and one has only to turn to the record of the Grangers, Populists, Green-backers, Free-silverites and the present Townleyites to realize that the U.F.O. and the U.G.G. will in time become but verbal symbols in a political Aldecadabra.

One thing is clear—Mr. Crerar may as well give up all hope of ever being at the head of a farmer government at Ottawa. Quebec has to be reckoned with, and Quebec is unflinchingly for Protection. Sooner than join up with the North-west radicals and imperil its financial stability, and, indeed, its very life, it would take its stand with the Protectionist groups from the other Provinces and make an end of the matter. Nor has Drury the slightest chance of stampeding the intelligent voters of the cities and towns into a vague People's Party. The depth of the man's mentality is shown by the choice of the phrase. At heart he is an unreconstructed Laurier-Liberal who imagines that he can corral the farmer and labor vote and shepherd them into the reorganized Liberal fold. But organized labor is through with him and his. And, as a matter of stern record, he does not even control the U.F.O. They have a crow to pick with him and one of these days the feathers will fly.

Consider the situation! It has all the elements of a stage-comedy. The U.F.O. chose this man and dragged him out of his rural obscurity. In common gratitude he should have stuck to their colors. He should at least have given fair warning of a change of heart, and, indeed, we think he ought to have resigned. Any honorable man would have done so under similar circumstances. It is a clear case of "special ethics." When a man joins a church he agrees to observe the creed of that church, and when he ceases to believe the creed he should at once withdraw. When a man joins a club he pledges his honor to abide by the by-laws of that club and when he can no longer do so, if he be a gentleman, he should immediately resign. When a man joins a political party he agrees to subordinate his ambitions and activities to the common good of that party, and, failing to do so, honor demands that he should leave it. Now, without the slightest warning, like a bolt out of the blue, Mr. Drury rebuked the U.F.O. for class-narrowness, and, without a "by your leave, gentlemen!" proceeded to agitate for an entirely new party to be known as the People's Party. For the moment he has office and the power that goes with office, but we are much mistaken if the *real* U.F.O. group will not, when the time is ripe, teach Mr. Drury a lesson he is not likely to forget.

We do not hold with Mr. J. J. Morrison, and we have said some pretty severe things about him, but as between Drury and Morrison, give us Morrison every time. In point of consistency he is the superior of his opponent. Of course, a People's Party is no party in any meaning of the word, since to be a People's Party it must take in everybody, *i.e.*, become no party at all. Crerar's Progressive Liberal Party is a little different, but carries a slur at the present Liberal Party, which is by inference *unprogressive.* How would "The People's Progressive Party" do? It sounds a little like "Pink Pills for Pale People," but that is alright, too, since what is needed in both cases is a tonic, and the more iron of common-sense there is in it the better.

We confess that we even begin to feel kindly to Mr. J. J. Morrison. He impresses us as a most mistaken and crude idealist, but fidelity is always admirable, and certainly Morrison may well be described as the Old Faithful of the U.F.O. He is not in office, and none of its cates come his way. He is a rather pathetic figure just now, and something of the mournfulness which attaches to the superannuated preacher and teacher is his. But he has honesty and he has teeth, and when it comes to political chicanery and betrayal he knows what to say and how to say it. We could almost love him for his slam at the organ of political hypocrisy. Speaking at Goderich under date of February 10th he said: "In 1917 the Liberal party went all to pieces, and now *The Globe* wants to get the shattered remnants of the party together and have them unite

with the U.F.O. *because the Globe wants a house to live in.*" Delicious! Perhaps the Hon. W. S. Fielding and his (what *shall* we call him?) can now understand why their hypocritical advances towards the farmer-group have been so contemptuously rejected. The game, in fact, is up. If they are still in any doubt a careful perusal of the above scathing words will make all clear. They would have been in a much better case—we mean morally—had they pursued the chivalrous course of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen and the National Liberal and Conservative Party, and, instead of fawning on the new political group with the plain intention of absorbing and destroying, denied the whole preposterous doctrine and fought it, giving no quarter and asking none on a question of principle. But then the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen understands the farmer and respects him and they, apparently, neither understand him nor respect him.

It is clear and evident, then, that the group that must be fought to the last ditch is the Free-Trade farmer-group. The policy—we believe the ruinous and mistaken policy—which the late Hon. Alex. Mackenzie laid down, and which Sir Wilfrid Laurier conveniently ignored during the whole of his long career, these new-comers in the political field have taken up. It will not do to say, as both Crerar and Drury do, that they do not mean to carry out their policies drastically and without delay. It is enough to know the goal for which they are headed. Absolute belief demands immediate obedience. They have read the sentence of death to Canadian industries, and no soothing words as to the late date of the execution will avail. But the very fact that they have given this assurance is a proof of their utter insincerity. What Crerar and Drury really want is office, and they are stupid enough to imagine that by sugar-coating the pill they can make the dose palatable to the victim. They are quite mistaken. But why doesn't *The Globe* go them one better and advocate Free Trade from the word go, instead of alternately flattering and scolding the farmers?

The Hon. Mackenzie King's trade-policy can be dismissed in a contemptuous paragraph. He has none. In British Columbia he was in favor of protection for fruit; in Aylmer he endorsed Mr. Charlton, who came out uncompromisingly for Free Trade; in Peterboro West he backed up Mr. Gordon, who ran, not on the platform of the Lapointe-King group, but on what was virtually the policy of the National Party. He has labored for months trying to convince the farmers that he thinks as they think, going so far as to say in North York that the toil-embrowned Burnaby should retire in his favor and leave the Conservatives and Liberals to fight it out between them. Would the principle of Protection be safe in this man's hands if the farmers in the Dominion House in the present hodge-podge should hold the balance of power? Would it?

The truth is the great crisis of 1917, as in a flash, showed all sensible Liberals where they stood. Then and there a new political alignment was made. It only needed a common peril to bring the loyal and sensible men of the country together. "Old things passed away and all thing became new." Something mystical and transcendent lifted them all to the heights of a passionate loyalty. Race conquered prejudice, and party affiliations were, for the time being, ignored. Now a new crisis has arisen, and once again we are called upon to close ranks and forget inherited prejudices, and work with singleness of aim for the common good. The peril to-day is financial bankruptcy. Let our splendid industries be crippled and our towns and cities decline—and this will surely happen if we throw away our only sword of defence, the Tariff—and Canada will sink into a mere appanage of the Republic to the south.

We believe that the great bulk of the Liberal party believe now, at this moment, as fervently in the doctrine of Protection as do the members of the old Conservative party. The war caused the scales to fall from their eyes, and brought them to a sudden realization of where they really stood. When the big trial of strength comes it is our profound conviction that they will vote for the National Liberal and Conservative Party, because that party has *not* attempted to compromise and will not attempt to compromise in the matter of a principle, the maintenance of which is vital to the continued prosperity and happiness of Canada, and, indeed, to our continuance as a Nation. We believe that if they do so Quebec will line up with them, and, in the end, the vast bulk of the farmers too, and then we shall have peace deep and profound.

HATS OFF TO THE WIN-THE-WAR LIBERALS

THE stand taken by the "Win-the-War Liberals" when the Union Government was formed has never been properly appreciated by the people at large. It was assumed as a matter of fact, but it involved heavy sacrifices. They broke with the traditions of a life-time, and they did it with great sadness of heart, but with inflexible resolution. They did not even stop to reason. What the effect on their political futures might be they neither knew nor cared. It was enough for them to see, high above the mists of party and party-advantage, the great shining peak of Duty. There never was a moment's doubt in their loyal hearts as to the right pathway to take. There is not now. Then it was the Empire as the finest expression of Liberty in the world; now it is Canada "One and Inseparable, Now and Forever." Against the brawls of faction and the agitator's lies they are standing like a wall of rock. The one solid entity in the country at this hour is the Government at Ottawa, made up of the best elements of the two great historic parties. These still stand firm, carrying on.

Recall those years of horror—1917-18! The German was thundering with his mightiest guns at the very gates of Amiens; Gough had retreated, and the enemy would have broken through and forced a humiliating peace had it not been for Cary of immortal fame; the toil of years seemed to have been lost overnight; it appeared, on the surface, as though hundreds of thousands of lives had been sacrificed in vain; the debts heaped up had already become staggering, incalculable; America, after many weary months of delay, had reeled forth raw, untrained and almost unarmed. It was the darkest period in all human history; the severest acid-test to which freedom and the love of freedom had ever been subjected. It was not the Empire alone that hung in the balance; but the fate of mankind for uncountable generations. With civilization, as understood by the liberty-loving nations, trembling on the edge of the abyss, there was no need for argument; the deed, naked as the face of God, alone counted with honest men.

It is perfectly true that, in the beginning, the farmers of the country were promised exemption. Many of them nevertheless dropped everything and went, refusing the boon. All honor to them! But some of them, when the whole safety of mankind hung in the balance and their own safety, called for a literal fulfilment of the pledge; and there is a small group at this hour, so dead to all sense of shame, as to harp on what they call the Government's broken promise. But the breaking of that pledge, honestly given at the time, was an act of audacity and nobleness and saved the soul of Canada. Had we not acted as we did we would not have kept faith with the lads who went forth with such light hearts and with such happy confidence.

It was, indeed, no time to consider political expediency, play safe or start academic discussions. The whole situation had long passed beyond the stage of argument. The Lord God of Battles had not yet "returned to the place of His rest." Men, to whom life means loyalty, never parley where honor is involved. Haig's laconic and awful deliverance that the British army had its back against the wall touched and set vibrating the deepest chord in the unconquered and unconquerable British soul. The whole Empire, for the first time in its long history, was consciously One in a fellowship of suffering—save for those few who pottered with loyalty and who, seeking to justify their stand, are banded together in a common hatred of their more loyal brethren. These men who place a narrow interpretation of party-loyalty first and put their country last will hang for all time on the gibbet of history. "We fought a great fight at Arles and thou wert not there" will apply to each one of them. As the years roll on they will come to realize, as did the Copperheads in the Civil War, that the impartial historian is the executioner of reputations.

The writer of these lines maintained in a former article that

the true pathos of the situation was the failure of the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier to seize the deep significance of the tremendous drama which was being enacted on the stage of life. He approached the whole question from the angle of inherited ideals. The phrase "Voluntary Enlistment" blinded his eyes and obscured his judgment. He was old, and something must be allowed for that "arterial sclerosis" of judgment which, in time, seems to affect us all. But what, either through infirmity or deeply rooted prejudice, he failed to grasp, the bulk of his English-speaking followers saw with perfect clearness, and, beholding, followed in loyalty and honor. And it was not an easy thing for them to do, for Sir Wilfrid had bound them to himself by ties of affection and friendship. The parting was not in anger but in sorrow.

Perhaps those politicians who during a long life enjoy great popularity would be well advised to make their bow and exit ere "the grasshopper become a burden and desire fail." Gladstone went out in obscuration; Bismarck was superciliously dismissed by an Imperial puppy, and Sir Wilfrid passed away amid clouds and thick darkness, living to see the party he had led to almost uninterrupted victory ruined beyond hope of resuscitation.

His mistake was in failing to see that the issues involved transcended the relations subsisting between the Provinces; transcended the *status* of Canada within the Empire; transcended the Empire itself, and involved the whole future well-being of the human family on this planet. He should have sent forth the "Fiery Cross" in defence of universal justice and liberty. Had he done so how different would have been his fame! It was a world-wide grapple between the forces of ordered freedom and the arrogant powers of autocracy; a struggle that took on, right from the start, the significance of the elemental and the cosmic. To have started a debate as to the superiority of Voluntary Enlistment over Compulsory Military Service at such a dread pass would have been as though one should have started arguing for the superiority of black powder over dynamite as the better explosive for arresting the progress of a conflagration at a time when the whole city was threatened with destruction.

When one of his most trusted and beloved followers put the question to Sir Wilfrid: "In case the people return you to power what do you propose to do?" "I shall obey the people" was the answer. "And if our soldiers at the front are threatened with destruction?" "I am bound by the verdict" was all that was vouchsafed in reply. And the pathos of it was that he was sincere! Another life-long Liberal, after listening to his old chief's explanation of where he stood, replied, "Sir Wilfrid, we must part! Your loyalty is a loyalty of the head. Mine is a loyalty of the blood." Doubtless the full history of that break will never be written; but if it ever should be it will reveal how history is sometimes made in a small room and in

a few short interviews and how the destinies of nations are determined.

The truth is that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a doctrinaire. When he essayed large practical schemes like the G.T.P. Ry. and the Transcontinental he fell upon disaster. That he was sincere in the stand he took against Conscription who would care to deny? And it was precisely because he put his point of view forward as the facet of a great truth, heartily believed in by us all till the rude disillusionment of disaster came, that it was so hard for his life-long friends to leave him. He realized the day after the election that men and women of British blood, in moments of great crisis, live not by logic but by loyalty. To the typical French logical mind this is always a mystery. We all believed that "One volunteer is worth ten pressed men," and we still believe it, and, what is more, we always shall believe it. But honor has the last say.

But where are theories now? Sydney Smith's axiom "In times of doubt take short views" is the order of the day. We can only sail by "dead reckoning" and trust to sea-anchors when the mists blind and the hurricane rages. The doctrinaire to-day may be prepared "to give his body to be burned," but it is the wary, resourceful, rule-of-thumb man, full of expedients and prepared to smash all precedents in order to keep the ship on an even keel and preserve both cargo and passengers, whom we are trusting for our financial salvation at the present hour. All doctrine is a generalization from the data of experience; but the Descent into Hell has given us a new set of impressions and has changed our entire point of view. Whole nations are getting along without gold. What does the political economist say to that?

Sir Wilfrid being what he was—a Quebecker and a Liberal of the old historic school—simply could not change. He stood to his colors and went down in ignominious defeat; and with him went out an organized group whose work was finished. The stern Free Trade principles of Alex. Mackenzie and Cartwright became gradually modified under the genial influence of office, and it only needed an upheaval, totally unrelated to economic theories, to bring the bulk of the historic Liberals definitely within the ring of Protectionism and clear the air of hypocrisy. Liberal and Conservative now stand together as one, bound by great heroic memories and by the respect born of manly intimacies. A grave peril holds them together at this hour and will hold them in ever closer and closer fellowship. What was at first a mechanical has now become a true chemical union. Those bitter and hard Liberals who would make alliances with the enemies of sound Constitutional Government merely to wreck and destroy the National Liberal-Conservative party, and those Conservatives who would make of party a

caste are alike ill-advised. At this hour all true patriots should think only one thought—national security. The new party, made up of both the great historic groups in almost equal measure, stands at this hour for the integrity of constitutional government and for the solvency of the country. The simple truth is that Honesty has triumphed. The wall of partition that had been growing ever thinner and thinner has at last been broken down, and the wisest and shrewdest men in the country are now agreed that adequate Protection is, and will be for many a day, not only the strong fortress guarding our prosperity, but a weapon of defence against all insidious encroachments upon the sacred province of the national soul.

Not only did the Win-the-War Liberals act with generosity and nobleness in joining the Union Government; they have acted, with a few exceptions, with true unselfishness since, and have proved their utter loyalty to Canada in their deeds. So far as Liberal or Conservative is concerned, "Mine and thine are ended." All that is needed at this hour to make the ring of loyalty complete is for those in control of the destinies of Quebec to stand shoulder to shoulder with the strong group at Ottawa in defence of our time-honored institutions against class-greed and ignorant half-baked idealism which threaten, if they are not countered and overthrown, to destroy the work of the founders of Confederation and throw back our country a hundred years.

Tossed as we all are by every wind of doctrine; our ears dinned by the clash of raucous voices bawling their economic heresies in the market-place, and threatened with financial disaster, the feeling in every heart is one of thankfulness that there is at Ottawa a group of strong men who represent the best brains of both parties, and who, out of pure love of country, are steering the ship of state amid many shoals and quicksands to the harbor of national security.

All glory to the Conservative and Liberal parties alike for taking the dare of fate and plunging in when the cry first went forth to save liberty and civilization. But let us not forget the stand taken by the Conscriptionist Liberals who, when it came, as it did eventually, to choosing between party-fealty or loyalty to those pure, unreasoned instincts which in their mystical significance transcend all mundane considerations, decided for what in their hearts they felt was the clear leading of the will of God. It was magnificent.

It is no longer a question of Liberal or Conservative as these words were understood in the days of Mackenzie or even Laurier. The problems before us are not of academic significance. The country is face to face with a new set of dangers. The Liberal has become a Conservative in the true, deep, noble meaning of the word. We are confronted at this hour with powers of ignorance and darkness prepared to wreck even the semblance of ordered

government and turn society into a mob. All lovers of rational freedom must get together and stand together if this fair land is not to become the prey of group-selfishness and vicious class-legislation. Class-distrust will inevitably lead to financial insolvency. We all want the same things—peace, security, prosperity—but we must work *together* to get them. For the National Liberal-Conservative party to withdraw at this perilous juncture at the behest of a man greedy for office and devoid of chivalry would be to expose themselves to the censure of all thoughtful patriots and to the condemnation of history. It is our reasoned conviction that they will not be intimidated from the clear path of duty by the wild ravings of a few party organs or the impudent demands of a few political gamblers, but will keep right on—

> "One equal company of heroic hearts
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN

THE time was, not so many years ago, when Liberalism was the dominating force in the land; now it is a thing of shreds and patches. Why the change? What are the principal reasons for it? The primary cause, we should say, is lack of adherence to principle; the secondary reason, narrowness and bitterness; and the third, lack of real leadership.

There can be no possible doubt that the failure of the Liberal party to carry out its pledges on the trade question, contained in its platform of 1893, bred a feeling of suspicion in the minds of the farmer community, particularly in the West. In a word, the farmers of the West distrusted the Liberals whom they had consistently supported, and so strongly were they imbued with this feeling that they became convinced they could not be properly represented in Parliament unless they formed a party of their own.

The actual fact is that the Liberal party has always been a mixture of men who were moderate protectionists and of men who leaned towards free trade. The weakness of their opponents—not the merits of their policy—gave them power in 1896, and they retained it for many years by virtue largely of the brilliance of their leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, aided by highly capable lieutenants. Their departure from principle was overshadowed by the eminence and wonderful gifts of that great political chieftain. That departure, coupled with vigorous and progressive administration, brought prosperity to the land, which for a time stilled the voice of the conscientious and the critical, but the seeds of suspicion and distrust, which were sown when the Liberal tariff of 1897 was introduced, slowly but surely germinated and grew, during the years,

until they developed into the plant we know as the farmer movement.

Adverting to the secondary reason for the decline and fall of the once great Liberal party—that of narrowness and bitterness—the records of Parliament and the press teem with evidences, especially in recent years. Nothing could be more narrow than the viewpoint of the official Liberal party in the last years of the great war. Rarely did they rise to the occasion. With the world converted into a veritable hell of carnage, they could not rise above their politics and play the national game. It will always be to their discredit that they bitterly opposed the only practicable steps to keep Canada's fighting forces at full strength and to save the honor of the country. Had Canada followed the advice of those who now mainly constitute the Liberal party, she would have been for ever disgraced in the eyes of the Empire and of the world. Thank God, hundreds of thousands of Liberals had the courage in those trying days to let the voice of their conscience speak above the voice of their party. It is to that band of men, who sacrificed their political affiliations on the altar of their country's needs, that real Liberalism can look up with pride, and not to the narrow, bitter, die-hard type who now misguide the destinies of the once great party.

Then look at the period of reconstruction. What stands to the credit of the Parliamentary Liberal party? Search the records, and what do you find? Evidence of co-operation and assistance? No! Evidence of constructive criticism? No! But you will find irresolution, futility and puerile criticism in abundance, every move being dictated by the sole motive to get into office. Indeed the Parliamentary Opposition since 1918 is the weakest since Confederation, as a result of which Parliament has seriously deteriorated. A strong, powerful Opposition would be a splendid asset to a country, in these days of great trial and difficulty, but, so far as the country's good is concerned, the present Opposition might as well be non-existent. It is not a factor; it is merely an element. It accomplishes nothing of benefit to the country and does not attempt to accomplish anything. It is content to play the rôle of destructive critic. National conditions never were so difficult to handle; national problems never were so grave; yet the men who speak for the Liberal party in Parliament play the old-time, two by four, game of petty, party politics, instead of joining hands towards a solution of the pressing questions of the day. They evidently look upon Parliament as the place for the airing of party spleen rather than a meeting place for the exercise of patriotic endeavor. This is no time to play the old-fashioned political game. Our position and conditions are such that the big question before the whole people is how to make bread and butter and keep the nation alive, pay interest on our debts, and pay off some of the principal, so that the children of the future will not be strangled. The war has also brought about a

new situation which is terribly alarming and dangerous. For the first time in our history we are alone in our financial and trading relations with the United States. We cannot longer depend upon fresh supplies of capital from old Mother England, and so it is that the value of our dollar is based upon the relative proportions of our trade with the United States. Because we buy much more from them than we sell to them, our dollar is at a heavy discount in that country, ranging from twelve to twenty per cent. This is a hard, matter-of-fact proposition. Roughly speaking, we buy from the United States a billion dollars a year and sell them half a billion, and because we are not in a position to pay the difference in gold, our dollar, which we all consider perfectly good and sound, is worth only eighty to ninety cents, according to the fluctuations dictated by American bankers. No more serious problem ever faced this young country and none the solution of which so required the exercise of our best brains. It is by far the biggest difficulty and handicap we have ever had. It means a drain on our resources directly and indirectly of at least two hundred million dollars a year. It means that, if it continues, we will be gobbled up by the Americans. In the face of it all other questions shrink into insignificance. What matter the jealousies and rivalries of professional politicians? Let us get down to business and fight this thing out! It is the biggest possible menace to Canada's future. It is a complete blockade in the way of Canada's development and progress. We cannot continue to pay that immense toll and maintain our nationality. What are we going to do about it? Forget it as the Liberals in their anxiety for office, and may we say also in their ignorance, choose to do? No! We must grapple with it and fight it out, in the same spirit as our soldiers fought the beastly Hun over the sea.

With that big exchange question confronting us, the spirit and tone of the Parliament of Canada is enough to cause every true patriot to despair. Away with your narrowness, your childish rivalry, your immature minds, your redundant verbosity, your backwoods oratory! Get down to business and do something to solve this immense and far-reaching problem!

Where do the leaders of official Liberalism stand on this? What position have they taken? None! Like the ostriches they bury their heads in the sand, and yet they aspire to the control of Canada. God, who loves little children, save us in the interests of the children of the future—save us from men like these! There could be little hope for these children if the attitude of the present-day Liberalism be maintained.

We come now to the third of our reasons for the present humiliating position of the once great Liberal party—that of lack of real leadership. There were giants in the old days—Laurier, Cartwright, Patterson, Blair, Mulock, Mowat, Mills, *et al.* Now we

are in the days of diminutives. It is difficult to imagine Mackenzie King as Premier of this country. What are his qualifications? In the sense of being able to string words together, he is a good speaker—none better! He can reel off language by the yard. To the uneducated, untutored and undiscriminating mind, he must appear a wonder; but, heavens above, what are words without practical ideas, when people want bread and butter; when the nation is pleading to be kept alive? What Mackenzie King lacks is common sense, practical knowledge and national vision. Without convictions, he will do anything or say anything to further his ambitions. In the West, he is a free trader, and in manufacturing constituencies in the East he is a protectionist. He blathers about mandates and usurpation of power, when, if he were genuinely patriotic, he should be trying to solve some of the big questions we have referred to. He is attempting to lead his political party in a flagrantly dishonest and hypocritical way. He knows that 90% of the eastern Liberals are moderate protectionists; yet he tries to make the farmer of the West believe he is for free trade. On the other hand, he says to the manufacturers of the East "Remember what Laurier did in 1897 and be satisfied to repose the same confidence in me that you did in him." He forgets that Laurier was a giant. Only a giant can break his pledges and get away with it;—a pigmy never can! ALPHA.

Editorial Note:—The following article has been contributed by an old resident of the North-west who has had a practical experience of farming, has taken a warm interest in the politics of his Province since its foundation, and is in a position to speak with authority. It is the most illuminating analysis of the situation that has yet appeared in print.

THE WESTERN SPHINX

By "Occidentalis."

TO the political prophet or election tipster the mentality of the westerner, and particularly of the western farmer, seems to offer a puzzling problem. What would otherwise be plain as a pikestaff is apt to become wonderfully complex when viewed through the medium of his prepossessions and partisan wishes. Take, for example, his forecast as to what is to happen when, say in 1922, the great race for the federal stakes is pulled off. If the election tout be a follower of Mr. Mackenzie King, he fondly hopes that during his prolonged western tour, Mr. King has by dexterous "jockeying" of the nondescript Liberal nag—black, brown, gray or sorrel; nobody can quite tell which—established himself as a lasting favorite. The United Farmers' tipster, on the other hand, is confident that when "the Day" comes, most of us westerners will be found wearing the same colors—the colors of the tariff-

smasher—and shouting our heads off while Wood waltzes home to an easy victory, and Crerar wins in a canter. Of course, the wish is father to the thought, and the bantling is entirely worthy of its parent.

The truth is that political speculation, always a difficult matter, is in this case rendered unusually risky by the number of unknown quantities in the human equation involved. The result of the next federal election is still on the lap of the gods, is still "wropt in mystery." There are, neverthelesss, certain considerations which suggest that, after all, the partisan seers may be far astray in their calculations, that they are merely indulging in the interesting but unprofitable amusement of counting their chickens before they are hatched. Or, to revert to the old figure, perhaps they are not such admirable judges of "form" as they imagine, and their "straight tips" may induce us to lay our money on the wrong horse. Such is, at any rate, the impression of one who claims to know pretty intimately the conditions in Alberta, where they are fairly typical of those obtaining in the other western provinces.

Neither the Liberals nor the United Farmers can look very sanguinely to the cities or larger towns, and yet it is just in these that increased representation may most reasonably be expected under the redistribution bill which must, under normal circumstances, be regarded as a certain forerunner of a general election. Of recent years there has been a marked conservative tendency in such centres of population, and nothing has happened to interfere seriously with that sentiment. The Government has not, of course, escaped at the hands of the urban, any more than at the hands of the rural population, those sharp little knocks which are inseparable from a prolonged term of office. But there is absolutely nothing to indicate that such criticisms have been so seriously meant as to foreshadow a change of allegiance. The record of His Majesty's Opposition is not very attractive, Mr. King's "pussy-foot" methods not very convincing, nor, on the other hand, is there much chance of the root-and-branch policy, or the tariff and fiscal pipe-dreams of the United Farmers commending themselves to the sober judgment of industrial and trading communities. Hari-kari has gone out of fashion even in Japan; suicide has always been regarded here as both a folly and a crime.

In the larger centres the organization of labor for political purposes has undoubtedly introduced an element which must be gravely considered. The United Farmers have not been slow to appreciate this fact. Pursuant to the new "broadening-out" policy which now finds favor with some of them, they have made approaches to an agreement with the Labor party, and also with the Great War Veterans' Association. The newspapers have already published the draft of an elaborate scheme of co-operation, or statement of policy in which one of the planks is the eventual nationalization

of the means of production. It is easy to guess where this "joker" comes from, but difficult to imagine how the farmers fail to realize that the process of nationalization should logically begin with property in land, the primary means of production. Coming to shear, they would go away shorn. And Labor might remember with advantage that even in New Zealand where it is so strong, the organized farmers have before now proved the most effective, and by no means the gentlest of strike-breakers. As a matter of fact, an alliance between parties so different in conditions and aims could only be loose and temporary. It is merely like one of those casual bargain-counter arrangements which would be so frequently made and broken under a "group" government such as both Labor and the United Farmers seem to favor as an ideal.

As for the usefulness of such an alliance in respect to its immediate purpose—the winning of seats at next election—that would depend very much on the nature of redistribution. If the urban districts were to continue to be tacked to large tracts of country as at present, a combination of labor and the farmers might be dangerous to their opponents. If these city ridings are made self-contained, the political wing of labor becomes less formidable even if it enjoys the moral support of the farmer. Given the latter condition, the results of civic contests in which labor men have tried their strength are at least most suggestive. Thus at the last elections in the city of Edmonton the Labor party put forward a full slate of ten candidates for the mayoralty, six aldermanic vacancies and three school-trusteeships. Their chief standard-bearer was, finishing his second year as mayor, and may thus be held to have enjoyed that possession which is proverbially nine points of the law. The party had the further advantage of a very complete organization elaborated by many months of patient effort. Yet their defeat was decisive, only a single candidate out of the ten managing by some curious miracle to be returned as an alderman. Of course, there is grave risk of error in arguing from civic to general politics. Purely local considerations have naturally a strong determining influence in municipal contests. It was possibly owing to these that by no means all of the labor men voted the labor ticket, but there is just as little reason to believe that they would do so at a federal election. The sane labor man has, very properly, no love for tariff-busting, or for those, whether Liberal or farmer, who would seek to realize their grotesque fiscal nightmares without regard to the industries which give him his bread and butter. Deep down in his heart, there is just as little love lost between him and the manipulators who would exploit him in the interests of their radical schemes or their own political advantage. Like the monkey he says nothing but thinks a great deal, and his thinking is apt to be translated into an unexpected vote on election day.

As for the G.W.V.A., that association is, and is likely to remain,

absolutely negligible as a political factor. It is without political cohesion or effective leadership, and a large proportion of its members are entirely opposed to its emergence in the political field at all. It is very doubtful indeed if those who took upon them to negotiate a treaty of alliance with Labor and the United Farmers had a shadow of authority to do so, or of right to speak for any save their own clique. A body which can only excite a very faint ripple of interest in its own elections, is not likely to make much of a splash in the big puddle of politics.

There remains the farmer—the real western sphinx. If he presents a puzzling problem to the election expert "there's a reason." Probably the average Albertan farmer himself is at the present time one of the most perplexed men in the world. He has jumped overboard from the old Liberal or Conservative ship, and has serious doubts whether the crazy hencoop he clings to will bear his weight. In the words of the very vulgar English song " 'E dunno w'ere 'e are," and seems very unlikely to find out. Between conflicting and chimerical policies, between the teaching of this misleader and the preaching of that, he is as helpless as a lost child.

He does not even know the precise character of the movement in which he is enlisted. He does not know whether he and his fellows are political Ishmaelites, their hands against every man outside their own ranks, or whether they are at liberty to beg, borrow or steal a profitable but passing alliance with other "groups." In this matter Messrs. Morrison and Drury have not all the "scrap" to themselves. More than a year ago—toward the end of October, 1919, to be more precise—there was a provincial election in the Cochrane constituency which attained considerable notoriety. In the course of the contest Mr. Wood, then as now, president of the U.F.A., declared most unequivocally for a separatist policy. The farmers were to fight for their own hand only. There were to be no entangling alliances. Politics was to be a frankly "cut-throat" game. It was to be a race for the farmers first, and, as for the rest, well, devil take the hindmost. Mr. Weir, an independent farmer member of the legislature, broke away from this policy of sublimated selfishness, and declined to take any part in the campaign on behalf of the farmer candidate who was ultimately returned on the narrow plank of occupational exclusiveness.

This was definite enough. There was ample room here for the flattest foot, and Mr. Wood had apparently put his down with decision. The events associated with the recent farmers' convention in Edmonton, and continued negotiations for alliance with labor and the returned soldier, suggest, however, that the farmers have now decided to "broaden out" or Druryize, and no longer insist on paddling their own canoe if they can find others complaisant enough to assist in its propulsion. The puzzled member of the

U.F.A.[1] is thus confronted with an entirely new position, to which he has to adjust his ideas as best he can.

But there is no "rest and be thankful" for the luckless farmer. Just when he has a chance of shaking more or less comfortably into a new place, he meets with indications that the old separatist ideas are by no means dead. Mr. Wood has never repented or recanted, and Mr. Wood has been re-elected president of the association. Another prominent official, the man who is not unlikely to be the farmer candidate for the vacancy created by the death of the Hon. A. L. Sifton, is apparently of the same way of thinking. A weekly paper which has been captured by a bunch of "imported" farmers, and which describes itself very modestly as the best farmers' newspaper in western Canada, has in a recent editorial referred sympathetically and with apparent approval to the wonderful scheme mooted in Minnesota for regularizing "group" government and dividing the people into no fewer than eight separatist categories according to vocation. This precious plan aims at the recognition as separate and mutually exclusive groups, of agriculture, mining, mechanical occupations, transportation, trades, professions, domestic and clerical. No person may vote for any candidate outside his unit, but—it is condescendingly added—any voter may choose a correlated occupation as his unit. The proposal boasts its democratic character. It is, of course, an eminently democratic proceeding to force me to vote for a professional or clerical candidate for whom perhaps I have no great regard but who happens to belong to my "unit," instead of voting for, say, a farmer whose character and principles may command my entire approval. Among eight of us, all good neighbors but belonging to different "units," it would become a cheerful game of each for himself—or his unit—and God for us all.

It is little wonder if under such conflicting conditions the poor farmer fails entirely to "find himself." He is assured with sickening iteration of the evils of the old party government. But he might reasonably ask how such evils are to be avoided by an indefinite multiplication of parties—why eight should be better than two. There is, indeed, no logical reason why we should stop with eight, or why, for example, the professional group should not be further divided, so that the medical men, the lawyers and the clergymen of the various churches (if they can forget the *odium theologicum* long enough to establish common interests) should each have their own little clique, coterie, or political unit, pursuing its own petty ends, and chaffering with others in the effort to attain them. Surely that way madness lies—the madness of Bolshevism, for in deed and in fact this occupational subdivision savors of the Soviet which has conferred such inestimable blessings upon happy Russia. Should Minnesota have the courage to try the monstrous experiment proposed to it, it must command a fearful interest. One thing is

pretty certain: any government established under such conditions would be foredoomed to instability. Its continuance would be dependent upon the most vicious bargain-counter methods, the dominant group throwing down to others bright scraps or attractive "remnants" of legislation to be bought at the price of temporary support. With seven groups to satisfy business should be brisk indeed. And patronage!—at one time the reproach of the old parties—what a riot and revel, what a scramble and scrimmage for the good things among the adherents of eight different "groups"! If the government party was strong enough, it would boldly keep the titbits for its friends, but with its fate trembling in the balance, it would have to throw a loaf here and a fish there with very few basketfuls of fragments left from this miraculous feast of the multitude of office-seekers. Of course, such a system, if generally applied, would be absolutely destructive of national unity, though the experimentalists and crack-brained quacks probably attach little importance to what others consider a most valuable asset. It would, indeed, seem likely that we must look to the south for our fancy politics as we have done for our fancy religions.

If the Alberta farmer is in doubt as to whether he is to enjoy a splendid isolation or may truck and trade with others, whether his association is condemned to endless celibacy, or may cast "goo-goo" and flirtacious eyes at other "groups," he is further anxious for a little light on such insignificant topics as the tariff. Only two political sections seem hitherto to have approached any certainty in this matter. Poor Mr. Mackenzie King is entirely up in the air—and won't come down until he knows the lighting-place is soft and safe. Like Orator Puff he has two voices. There is a Liberal policy for the West which coquets with free trade, but when eastern voters are to be conciliated there are hedgings and qualifications innumerable. Mr. Meighen and others speaking for the present Government have never played fast and loose with the question, or left friend or foe in doubt as to their view. They may be wrong, but at any rate we know precisely where they stand. Mr. Crerar and his friends have also attained a certain fixity of conviction, though their general acceptance of free trade varies in terms and degree with the conditions—and the longitude. Even in the West there are, however, farmers who do not forget that they are Canadians, and would not wish that, for the sake of a few dollars in their pockets every year, our essential manufacturing industries should be left defenceless. We are confronted with a huge post-war indebtedness; we are under deep obligations to our soldiers; and it would be interesting if Mr. Crerar would tell us how we are to meet the one or discharge the other if we throw down our defensive barriers. The unfavorable balance of trade has depreciated our money. While we continue to purchase almost twice as much from the United States as the United States buys from us this must

unhappily continue. It seems a strange remedy to suggest that we should wilfully disarm ourselves of our only protection, and deliberately invite our neighbors to capture more of our trade and knock still higher percentage off our dollar. But possibly Mr. Crerar would sacrifice our trade interests and financial prospects with as light a heart as he would, on his own showing, tear up miles of our railroads, although by doing so he should abandon to their fate settlers who were tempted into our new country by the existing facilities of transportation. And the latter trifling matter is just one of those on which our Alberta farmers should ask for definite assurances from the aspirant to the honors of a "group" premier. Some of them are very vitally interested in that, even if they care little for the broader questions of Canadian trade.

It is a far cry from the Protestant Reformation to the farmers' movement, and it might well seem more than fanciful to trace any analogy between them. And yet there is one thing in which some sort of parallel might be drawn. The Reformation was fraught with great blessings in the extension of liberty of thought and conscience, but it brought in its train a host of fanatics and crazy speculators like the Anabaptists and Antinomians whose vicious tenets are now practically forgotten. The Farmers' movement was natural and necessary. The writer has direct, personal and painful experience of the difficulties with which the tiller of the soil has had to contend. But that movement, which was pregnant with good, has also produced its brood of visionaries and hare-brained experimentalists, to whom an idea apparently commends itself in direct proportion to its revolutionary character. While his knowledge on so many points is woefully indeterminate, the western farmer is being forcibly fed with misleading statistics and the dreams of the wild-eyed enthusiast. Thus "the best farmers' newspaper in Western Canada" accepts responsibility for the statement that at the time the farmers' movement originated, there were only eighteen *bona-fide* farmer representatives in Parliament, while there were "four million farming families in the Dominion." Allowing for an irreducible minimum of two to a family, and discounting altogether the chance that there might be a few children in some of tl ese "farming families," an aggregate of eight million persons associated with agricultural pursuits seems to leave a curiously narrow margin for the rest of our population. It may be said safely that a publicist who makes such a statement may be expected to say anything.

Again, the Winnipeg organ of the grain growers publishes, without a word of warning criticism, some extracts from a brochure by "a veteran member of the U.F.A." The first plank in this gentleman's modest platform recommends the wholesale issue of enforced money—apparently paper money. What would become of the poor Canadian dollar in that case? We are told that it takes

some 30,000 Bolshevist roubles to buy a decent pair of boots. A bushel of potatoes might very well under the new conditions cost about a thousand dollars. After such an auspicious beginning, and the holding out of the dazzling prospect of such an abundance of money that "no person will be obliged to borrow and pay even one per cent for the use of a public utility," it is not surprising to find this first plank wind up with nationalization of banks (a favorite panacea with some leaders of the U.F.A.), and with repeal of all the laws for the collection of debts between individuals. Just how long credit would outlive the last summary measure we need not pause to determine.

The friends of the United Farmers' organization claim that it has an ample field for good work. But while its organs harbor and give currency to such preposterous, wild-cat, revolutionary balderdash, the confidence of its sane and sober members must inevitably be shaken. Such men have no sympathy with the visionary and the Bolshevist. Soviet methods have no attraction for them. Until more rational counsels are enforced, until the frantic faddist is relegated to his proper place, and until the responsible leaders have expressed themselves explicitly in a sane and precise policy, the men of calm judgment will refuse to allow their group or class prejudice to allure them into the extravagant or unknown. Had an election been called a year or a year and a half ago, they might have been swept off their feet by the first surge of the advancing movement, but they have now had time to regain their feet. They have had time to be disgusted with the fantastic antics of the visionary, and to learn distrust of leaders whose enthusiasm is not tempered with discretion. They are saying these things—in private—and their saying is very apt to be turned into doing at the polls. In the meantime they offer material so uncertain for the political tipster that the boldest might well hesitate to prophesy.

Some day Mr. Crerar may awake to the fact that "there were kings before Agamemnon." Some day he may rest from his vainglorious vaunting of himself and his party as the first to introduce honesty and disinterestedness in Canadian public life. Some day he may cease self-righteous cavilling and value more justly the much better men who preceded him in Dominion politics. Some day he may learn the rudiments of real statesmanship. He may then have a message which will appeal to the solid, sober-thinking element among western farmers, but until then his reliance upon them is only a matter of interested conjecture. And be it remembered, failure to read the riddle of the sphinx bore a severe penalty. It does so still.

THE REAL CHRIST

WE hardly realize even yet, notwithstanding the fine results of modern scholarship, how essentially simple the outlook of Jesus was, how limited even. We are no longer engulfed by the great wave of adoration, to be sure, but we still feel the pull of that tide. After all, the words he used constitute our only clue to the mystery of his profound and tender spirit. To those words we must turn. Let us try to envisage his personality from the scant remains!

We shall discover that his genius was purely objective. He called himself "the son of man." The end of man's action was obedience to the will of God, and the will of God he defined on a certain occasion as the ordinary judgment of right by man himself. He believed in immortality and a spiritual world, but his actual references to it are scant. Does he wish to illustrate the preservative power of goodness? He uses common salt as an illustration. Does he wish to prove the immortality of the deed? He speaks of the housewife's yeast. Does he wish to make clear the function of the ideal? It is a candle to all that may be in the house. The way to sin and death is a broad highway; the way to life and final peace a narrow path which few travel. Would he draw men's attention away from the contemplation of human splendor? He dims the gorgeous robe of Solomon, aglitter with gems and stiff with barbaric gold, by pointing to a scarlet lily swaying lightly on its stem. God is a shepherd with a shepherd's seeking instinct, and the race of men sheep that wander and get lost occasionally; they are fish gathered of every kind; they are mingled wheat and tares, and the kingdom they seek is now a goodly pearl; now a treasure hid in a field, now a talent to be increased. The message is new wine in new wineskins, or it is a treasure in a bag to be distributed by the *wise* scribe, or it is bread given by a father to a dependent son. How material it all is, and yet how fine! There is something of the breath of the sea in it. Here was one, surely, who walked the earth as a lover, and who saw in common things, not some mystical significance after the style of Crashaw or modern symbolists like Maeterlinck and Yeats, but just health, beauty, fitness, power and joy, "the goodly smile of the brown old earth."

Say what you will—call it accident or call it Providence—through this sublime spirit came to the race of mankind the crowning conception of gentleness as the last grace of endeavor, experience and culture. The idea of caring for the weak, of siding with the oppressed, of putting oneself on the side of the sinner, of overcoming violence, greed and oppression by spiritual weapons—wisdom, integrity, comprehension—of seeking to understand on the human side the dark genesis of evil and apportioning just blame—these, the distinctive marks of the highest human types, all trace back to a

little hill-town in Palestine, to a baffled, defeated life, to the agony of Olivet and the martyrdom of Calvary. That profounder vision through which we are enabled to envisage life in its primary human aspects as a consciousness seeking guidance, as a spirit feeling after spirit, as a heart throbbing with wild pulsations towards a compassion it would fain believe infinite in power and pity—the view of life as a spiritual conflict, to be crowned on some glad day with spiritual triumph—this, the supreme epitome and climax of the whole man, we trace back by shining unbroken links to him who cried unto the wearied, sorrowful company of mankind:

"Come unto me and I will give you rest."

It was the rest of a vast ideal of goodness, of wisdom, of gentleness and love. Happy is he who, amid the materialism of a sordid age, still seeks this golden fleece, still sees, shouldering over the mists and damps of time, the amethyst peaks of the ideal and the beckoning lights of the City of God.

CANADIAN LITERATURE AND ART

HOW is it possible for Canadian literature to thrive when it is not adequately protected or decently patronized? We send three millions in good money to the publishers south of the line, and get in return—what? Clean morals; high, pure romance; originality of plot; purity of diction; enlightenment; stimulus; inspiration? On the contrary, we get trash. Commercialism is stamped upon the whole output. Now and again a Canadian publisher makes a local success of a novel written by one of the native-born; but it is safe to say that such success is usually the aftermath of foreign appreciation. Let a Canadian author make a shining success abroad and there is no end to the complacent purring that goes on; but should he depend upon the Canadian public for appreciation he is likely to starve—unless, indeed, he write, as many do, for the pure joy of it. All honor to them!

That Canadian authors should not possess the fullest measure of protection in the matter of copyright in their own country is a simple shame. The tragedy of it all is that our members of parliament have no animus against letters. Over and over again bills have been introduced into parliament and fulsome eulogies have been passed on our poets, historians and novelists, only to die and be forgotten at the end of the session. It is our annual tragedy, the result of callous stupidity.

What is the use of boasting about Canada being a nation if our authors, artists, scientists, musicians are forced to leave the country in order to live? A nation is an aggregate of human beings vividly conscious of a unique destiny. A nation is a folk blocked out, definite, peculiar and original, shaped to an end by great historic causes with a literature, an art, a politic of its own. Material

prosperity, of course, is not to be despised; but is the cash-register to be our apotheosis? If so God help us! The Italian republics, before the advent of Vasco di Gama, were abundantly prosperous; but surely the true glory of that brilliant period was expressed in the amazing beauty achieved by the great artists; the stupendous advances made in literary culture; the almost miraculous architecture!

It is time for Canada to produce something more than money. "Man does not live by bread alone." If our authors and publishers were given a decent chance (which they have never had) the result would surprise the nation and, perhaps, the world. Let the best come in free from any country; but put a heavy duty—not less than 50%—on literary trash of all sorts. When it comes to trash we can produce without any intellectual effort all that is good for us. The Sunday newspapers can attend to that. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

PRESIDENT HARDING AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SO far as the United States is concerned the last word has been uttered on the subject of the League of Nations. The United States, as *The Onlooker* predicted in its first issue, is definitely out of the European mess. It elects to stand aloof. Close contact with psychologies different from its own has created a distaste of foreign adventure. A century and a half of isolation has resulted in an attitude of mind, in the case of America, that may be described as continental. The golden bowl of racial unity was broken at the cistern when the thirteen colonies took up arms against the motherland. It was the saddest, the most tragic schism in history. Had the broad-minded views of Burke and Chatham prevailed the great Anglo-Saxon race at this hour might have been, if not politically, yet, surely, in every other respect, at one.

It is well known that during the composition of his Inaugural Speech the president-elect took into his counsel the three greatest jurists in the United States—Root, Hughes and Taft—and though no doubt the Inaugural is his own composition from first to last it is a fair inference that the momentous phraseology in which the final declination of participation in the League is made represents a sort of composite effort. There can be no misunderstanding of the words of renunciation. Stripped of superfluous rhetoric they run as follows:—"America can be a party to no military alliances. It can enter into no political commitments, nor assume any economic obligations or subject our decisions to any other than our own authority." Boiled down this means that the United States will have nothing whatever to do with the League of Nations as at present constituted. The idealistic sentences in which this stern

deliverance is wrapped up are, no doubt, sincerely intended, but they are but the sugar-coating to the pill.

We have in this development a tragedy of idealism. President Wilson may be all he is described to be in Premier Smuts' fine appreciation in the *New York Times.* The American people think otherwise. His repudiation is the most emphatic in history. He set his single will against immemorial convictions, and has received his answer. It is a warning to all future presidents of the United States to obey the Constitution, and not attempt to put personal conviction above the basic law. The egotist in politics always rides to a fall.

The great mistake that was made at Versailles was the mixing up of idealism with the problem of immediate justice. President Wilson refused to visit the devastated area in northern France lest the sight should create a bias in his mind. He was ill-advised. He should have remembered that Germany put the issue to the sword, that the late German Emperor had warned the German people that it was "death or exile," and that had Germany been successful she would have demanded "the last drop of blood nearest the heart." "They that draw the sword shall perish by the sword." Did he call to mind those words of a greater idealist than he? He came with his "fourteen points" and confused the stern deliberations of men, and, indeed, nations still bleeding from the most illogical, bestial, inhuman assault upon humanity of which history has any record. It was no time to discuss abstract idealism, in which we all believe as much as he, but for the enactment of stern penalties, the payment of a just debt, the righting of a great wrong. First comes that which is just, afterwards that which is of the ideal world.

The roaring tides of the moral order had the right of way. It was not a time to talk of summer seas and happy isles and a vague paradise. It was a time to allow the moral order of supremacy. Had President Wilson taken Root, Taft and Hughes with him, or sent them as a delegation, remaining himself in his proper place, it is our reasoned conviction that the world would be now at peace. Germany and her allies punished and done with, a true congress of nations, freed of the past with its bitterness and its sorrows, could have been called and a start made in the direction of a Supreme Court of Nations. Germany staked all on the sword and lost. She intended a military settlement in the event of victory, and in her intentions the United States was included. What folly and madness was it then to remove the whole terrible settlement out of its true province—the practical, *i.e.*, the military—armed and triumphant justice—and becloud it with rosy altruistic mists which but beclouded the issue and, as we now know, resulted in leading the world into a deeper bog. The truth is the peace should have been signed in Berlin; Germany should have been occupied, as she occupied France in 1871, and those nations that were outraged and

despoiled—England, France, Belgium, Servia—should have proceeded to carry out the terms of a stern and just peace.

In the long run it is only the idealist who builds up the fabric of his vision on the solid foundation of natural justice and right, and who acquiesces in the stern deliverance "Those who sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," who has a chance of surviving as a saviour of society. Alluring doctrines, beautiful phrases, altruistic intentions are easily come by, but the men who carry out the will of God are those who rest in deeds; and as a rule these are not orators or poets or philosophers or even philanthropists, least of all doctrinaires, but simple, true souls who do the day's work by the day's light and in the deed achieve immortality. Sir Harry Vane was the arch-idealist of his time. If words and theories and glittering phrases could have saved England he would have saved it. It was of him that Cromwell cried: "Sir Harry Vane! Sir Harry Vane! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!"

THE CAVALIER IN EXILE

By James Cobourg Hodgins.

In Bruges there stands a mighty tower
(Nigh to "The Chapel of The Blood"),
And in that square and hour by hour
The music washes like a flood.

I yawn and saunter through the streets;
Fight o'er my battles; lurch to rest—
The broken soldier no one greets,
Though once I lorded with the best.

The court hangs round "The Archer's Club,"
Where Charles stalks lazily across
The emerald turf and, "Rub-a-dub!"
The drum beats homage by the foss.

I'm sick of all this death-in-life;
Sick of these stinking, slow canals;
These Brabant boors—God, send us strife
Instead of jades and falderalls!

In Notre Dame they say the mass;
Within his stall the sad king sits;
While o'er the brine great actions pass,
And Europe shakes with ague-fits.

Old Noll, you devil, you're a man!
I fought you hard and fought you fair!
God built you on the largest plan—
And gave you Richard for an heir!

In Bruges there stands a mighty tower,
And through the twilight suddenly,
And through the night and hour by hour
The great bell booms out—"Loyalty!"

HYMN TO PAN

By James Cobourg Hodgins.

God of the wind blow o'er me!
God of the tree inspire!
God of the stream flow o'er me,
And match me my desire!

For I am sick of the battle
In which men fall like leaves;
Sick of the noise and rattle,
And the sparrows in the eaves.

Pipe to the blood of the fighter!
Lure me beyond the pine!
Call till my heart grows lighter
Than the spume of the wind-tost brine!

Let me oar the bright ether in gladness
With the Canada goose and the swan;
Let me thud the forest in madness
Like the moose through the mist of the dawn

When the smell of the poison of science
Smites his nostrils and rouses his gorge;
Let me shrill to all worldlings defiance,
And scoff at the fetters they forge.

Oh, make me a brother of tall trees!
Oh, make me a sister of seas!
(Let the philistine squabble o'er small fees!
Let him rot in his insolent ease!)

Save, oh, save me God Pan in the darkness
From the tincture and vial and chart!
Let me feel all Thy strength in its starkness
For a chill smites and palsies my heart.

Let me call on hot rocks in the noontide
(I ashiver from lake fed with springs!)
Let me breast a warm river at moontide;
Let me dive in the rapid that flings

Its spume to the green-crested cedar
That clings to a crevice for life;
Let me grapple the outermost leader
Vast, sapphirine, crested with strife.

Souse me deep in the brine of the ocean;
Let the tideways boom hard in my ears.
Let me drink the last drop of Thy potion,
And cast like a mask all my fears.